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Maryland Early Fall Assessment Data and Kindergarten Readiness Results Reflect National Trends on Learning Loss

Preliminary Results Signify Learning Loss as Result of Pandemic; More than Half of All Maryland Students in All School Systems are Not Proficient in Prior Grade ELA and Math Assessments

BALTIMORE, MD (December 8, 2021) – The Maryland State Department of Education released preliminary early fall assessment and kindergarten readiness scores for the 2021-22 school year, which demonstrated an overall decline in student proficiency for English Language Arts (ELA), Mathematics and Kindergarten Readiness. Maryland’s overall State results reflect similar trends seen nationally. As a result of the learning disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, nationally fewer students are meeting proficiency in English Language Arts and Math.

Statewide more than 92% of students took the test this fall with 35% of students meeting or exceeding expectations in ELA and 15% meeting or exceeding expectations in Math, compared to 43.7% in ELA and 33.0% in Math for grades 3-8 in 2018-19. For the Science assessment, 39% of students met or exceeded expectation. The Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) also reveals a decrease in the percent of kindergarteners demonstrating readiness, down from 47% in 2018-19 to 40% this year. The state data provided are preliminary with final results being published at the end of January 2022.

“This is a transformational time as we emerge from the pandemic, address disrupted education, and implement The Maryland Blueprint for Maryland’s Future. This preliminary assessment data confirms what we anticipated: learning suffered during the pandemic, and we must be innovative, collaborative and bold in our approach to accelerate student achievement and support mental, social, and emotional health,” said State Superintendent of Schools Mohammed Choudhury. “We are seizing this moment to ensure that every Maryland student has access to excellent educational opportunities and strong outcomes. We will not accept a return to normal, because normal was not good enough, especially for those who have been historically underserved.”

“The Maryland State Board of Education is committed to supporting and collaborating with all of our partners - policy makers, local school systems, educators, parents and students to ensure that we continue to direct resources to where they are most needed,” said State Board of Education

President Clarence Crawford. “With our resolution to keep classrooms open for full-time, in person learning, the fierce dedication of our State’s talented and skilled teachers and school leaders, and MSDE’s leadership, we will empower our students to succeed academically, socially and emotionally.”

Local school systems have the assessment data available to accelerate learning as we emerge from the Covid-19 pandemic. To address disrupted education and learning loss, MSDE is directing resources to local school systems as outlined in its American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ARP ESSER) plan, which provides an approximate \$1.95 billion in emergency federal funds to meet the urgent needs of schools and students. The plan focuses on: accelerating student engagement, supporting mental and social-emotional health, and addressing disrupted education with evidence-based strategies such as tutoring and direct resources to students most impacted.

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